United Nations A/69/864

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 April 2015

Original: English

Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 66 (a)
Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Letter dated 23 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the joint statement signed by 50 Member States following the informal meeting of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly held on 22 January 2015, in New York, on the concerns of a rise in anti-Semitic violence worldwide (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 66 (a).

(*Signed*) Ron **Prosor**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-05710 (E) 160415

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 23 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint statement following the informal meeting of the General Assembly to address concerns of a rise in anti-Semitic violence worldwide, 22 January 2015

The statement below was released following a special session of the General Assembly addressing the rise of anti-Semitism and on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay:

We are deeply concerned that in recent years there has been an alarming increase in anti-Semitism worldwide. Anti-Semitism is a manifestation of racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance. In recent years, we have witnessed increased incidents of hatred, intolerance, discrimination and violence against individuals based on their religion or belief. Sadly these acts have also targeted institutions including schools, cultural centres and places of worship. The Jewish Community has been particularly targeted.

Even as the Holocaust remains a part of living memory, Jewish communities around the world are once again under attack, and in certain parts of the world Jews are attacked for exercising their human rights of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression.

The recent terrorist attack against a kosher supermarket in Paris in January 2015 is a painful reminder that anti-Semitism remains an urgent problem that must be addressed. The United Nations must step forward and play a pivotal role in combating anti-Semitism as well as intolerance, discrimination and violence based on religion or belief. It is a moral imperative for this institution to call on governments around the world to promote tolerance and mutual respect in their societies.

We applaud those individuals, governments, and international and national bodies that clearly condemned anti-Semitism and reaffirmed the 2004 Berlin Declaration on anti-Semitism at the recent OSCE conference in November 2014 and the OSCE Ministerial Declaration on Enhancing Efforts to Combat anti-Semitism in Basel in December 2014.

In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly designated 27 January as the annual International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. Two years later, the Assembly adopted resolution 61/255 condemning Holocaust denial. Today, we reaffirm that Holocaust denial is a form of anti-Semitism.

Based on our conviction of the need to counter all forms of religious intolerance, we therefore call all Member States to:

(a) Declare their categorical rejection of anti-Semitism;

(b) Encourage political leaders and public figures and educators to publicly and vocally condemn anti-Semitic incidents and consider designating government officials to monitor and address all forms of discrimination based on religion or belief, including anti-Semitism;

(c) Review their national legislation and ensure appropriate mechanisms for combating discrimination based on religion or belief, including anti-Semitism;

(d) Promote opportunities for educational initiatives and teacher-training programmes that provide young people with education on the subject of anti-Semitism;

(e) Monitor crimes, including of anti-Semitic nature, and effectively investigate them in a prompt and impartial manner with the aim of prosecuting those responsible;

(f) Strengthen dialogue with civil society to promote mutual respect, tolerance and understanding between different communities;

(g) Welcome the plan of the Department of Public Information of the United Nations to organize follow-up conferences to the "Unlearning Intolerance" series started in 2004, including on anti-Semitism, with a goal to review progress and identify new challenges.

The determination to eradicate the conditions that gave rise to the Holocaust was a guiding principle among the founders of this organization over six decades ago. Let us rededicate ourselves to that principle and endeavour to eliminate anti-Semitism in all its forms.